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Fact Sheet

Center for the American Woman and Politics
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WOMEN IN THE U.S. CONGRESS 1990

In 1990, women hold **30** seats in the 101st U.S. Congress — **2** in the Senate and **28** in the House of Representatives. This is the largest number of women ever to serve in Congress. Women hold **5.6%** of the 535 seats in Congress — **2.0%** of the 100 Senate seats and **6.4%** of the 435 House seats.

The two women currently serving in the Senate are **Nancy Landon Kassebaum** (R-KS), elected in 1978 and re-elected in 1984, and **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD), elected in 1986.

Twenty-eight women from 20 states serve in the House of Representatives, including **15** Democrats and **13** Republicans. They are:

Helen Delich Bentley, R-MD
Lindy Boggs, D-LA
Barbara Boxer, D-CA
Beverly Byron, D-MD
Cardiss Collins, D-IL
Nancy Johnson, R-CT
Marcy Kaptur, D-OH
Barbara Kennelly, D-CT
Marilyn Lloyd, D-TN
Jill Long, D-IN
Nita Lowey, D-NY
Lynn Martin, R-IL
Jan Meyers, R-KS
Susan Molinari, R-NY
Constance Morella, R-MD
Mary Rose Oakar, D-OH
Elizabeth Patterson, D-SC
Nancy Pelosi, D-CA
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-FL
Marge Roukema, R-NJ
Patricia Saiki, R-HI
Claudine Schneider, R-RI
Patricia Schroeder, D-CO
Louise Slaughter, D-NY
Virginia Smith, R-NE
Olympia Snowe, R-ME
Jolene Unsoeld, D-WA
Barbara Vucanovich, R-NV

Senators **Kassebaum** and **Mikulski** were not up for re-election in 1988. All 23 incumbent congresswomen sought re-election and won in 1988. The two representatives newly elected in the 1988 general elections are: **Nita Lowey** (D-NY), who previously served as New York's assistant secretary of state, and **Jolene Unsoeld** (D-WA), who was a state representative. They are joined by: **Jill Long** (D-IN), a former city councilwoman who won a special election in March 1989; **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL), who previously served as a state senator and won a special election in August 1989; and **Susan Molinari** (R-NY), a former city councilwoman who won a special election in March 1990.

A total of **129** (77D, 52R) women have served in the U.S. Congress to date, including **16** (9D, 7R) in the Senate and **115** (69D, 46R) in the House. Two women — **Margaret Chase Smith** (R-ME) and **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD) — have served in both the House and the Senate.

The first woman elected to the House of Representatives was **Jeannette Rankin** (R-MT), who served from 1917 to 1919 and again from 1941 to 1942. The first woman to serve in the Senate was **Rebecca Latimer Felton** (D-GA); appointed in 1922, she served for one day. **Nancy Landon Kassebaum** (R-KS) is the first woman to have been elected to the Senate without having previously filled an unexpired Congressional term; **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD) is the first Democratic woman to do so.

New York has had more women in its congressional delegation than any other state — a total of fifteen to date, all in the House. Ten states have never sent a woman to either the Senate or the House; they are Alaska, Delaware, Iowa, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Five Black women, two Asian/Pacific Islander women, and one Hispanic woman have served in the House of Representatives, including six Democrats and two Republicans. No woman of color has ever served in the Senate. The first Black woman to serve in Congress was **Shirley Chisholm** (D-NY); elected in 1968, she served until 1983. Four other Black women have served in the House: **Yvonne Brathwaite Burke** (D-CA, 1973-1979), **Barbara Jordan** (D-TX, 1973-1979), **Katie Hall** (D-IN, 1982-1985), and **Cardiss Collins** (D-IL). First elected in 1973, Collins is the only Black woman currently serving in Congress. **Patsy Takemoto Mink** (D-HI), who was the first Asian/Pacific Islander woman to serve in the House, was elected in 1964 and served until 1977; **Patricia Saiki** (R-HI), first elected in 1986, is the second. **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL), elected in August 1989, is the first Cuban-American (female or male) and the first Hispanic woman ever elected to Congress.

Women hold no leadership positions in the 101st Congress, and they do not chair any of the standing congressional committees. Seven women, all of whom served prior to 1977, have chaired congressional committees: Senator **Hattie Caraway** (D-AR), and Representatives **Martha Griffiths** (D-MI), **Mae Nolan** (R-CA), **Mary Norton** (D-NJ), **Caroline O'Day** (D-NY), **Edith Rogers** (R-MA), and **Leonor Sullivan** (D-MO). No woman has ever been speaker of the House or majority or minority leader of the Senate.

A note to users of our fact sheets: Please credit the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Additional information from *Women in the United States Congress*, Congressional Research Service, March 1987.

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CONGRESS	DATES	WOMEN IN SENATE	WOMEN IN HOUSE	TOTAL WOMEN
65th	1917-1919	0 (0D, 0R)	1 (0D, 1R)	1 (0D, 1R)
66th	1919-1921	0 (0D, 0R)	0 (0D, 0R)	0 (0D, 0R)
67th	1921-1923	1 (1D, 0R)	3 (0D, 3R)	4 (1D, 3R)
68th	1923-1925	0 (0D, 0R)	1 (0D, 1R)	1 (0D, 1R)
69th	1925-1927	0 (0D, 0R)	3 (1D, 2R)	3 (1D, 2R)
70th	1927-1929	0 (0D, 0R)	5 (2D, 3R)	5 (2D, 3R)
71st	1929-1931	0 (0D, 0R)	9 (5D, 4R)	9 (5D, 4R)
72nd	1931-1933	1 (1D, 0R)	7 (5D, 2R)	8 (6D, 2R)
73rd	1933-1935	1 (1D, 0R)	7 (4D, 3R)	8 (5D, 3R)
74th	1935-1937	2 (2D, 0R)	6 (4D, 2R)	8 (6D, 2R)
75th	1937-1939	3 (2D, 1R)	6 (5D, 1R)	9 (7D, 2R)
76th	1939-1941	1 (1D, 0R)	8 (4D, 4R)	9 (5D, 4R)
77th	1941-1943	1 (1D, 0R)	9 (4D, 5R)	10 (5D, 5R)
78th	1943-1945	1 (1D, 0R)	8 (2D, 6R)	9 (3D, 6R)
79th	1945-1947	0 (0D, 0R)	11 (6D, 5R)	11 (6D, 5R)
80th	1947-1949	1 (0D, 1R)	7 (3D, 4R)	8 (3D, 5R)
81st	1949-1951	1 (0D, 1R)	9 (5D, 4R)	10 (5D, 5R)
82nd	1951-1953	1 (0D, 1R)	10 (4D, 6R)	11 (4D, 7R)
83rd	1953-1955	2 (0D, 2R)	12 (5D, 7R)	14 (5D, 9R)
84th	1955-1957	1 (0D, 1R)	17 (10D, 7R)	18 (10D, 8R)
85th	1957-1959	1 (0D, 1R)	15 (9D, 6R)	16 (9D, 7R)
86th	1959-1961	2 (1D, 1R)	17 (9D, 8R)	19 (10D, 9R)
87th	1961-1963	2 (1D, 1R)	18 (11D, 7R)	20 (12D, 8R)
88th	1963-1965	2 (1D, 1R)	12 (6D, 6R)	14 (7D, 7R)
89th	1965-1967	2 (1D, 1R)	11 (7D, 4R)	13 (8D, 5R)
90th	1967-1969	1 (0D, 1R)	11 (6D, 5R)	12 (6D, 6R)
91st	1969-1971	1 (0D, 1R)	10 (6D, 4R)	11 (6D, 5R)
92nd	1971-1973	2 (1D, 1R)	13 (10D, 3R)	15 (11D, 4R)
93rd	1973-1975	0 (0D, 0R)	16 (14D, 2R)	16 (14D, 2R)
94th	1975-1977	0 (0D, 0R)	19 (14D, 5R)	19 (14D, 5R)
95th	1977-1979	2 (2D, 0R)	18 (13D, 5R)	20 (15D, 5R)
96th	1979-1981	1 (0D, 1R)	16 (11D, 5R)	17 (11D, 6R)
97th	1981-1983	2 (0D, 2R)	21 (11D, 10R)	23 (11D, 12R)
98th	1983-1985	2 (0D, 2R)	22 (13D, 9R)	24 (13D, 11R)
99th	1985-1987	2 (0D, 2R)	23 (12D, 11R)	25 (12D, 13R)
100th	1987-1989	2 (1D, 1R)	23 (12D, 11R)	25 (13D, 12R)
101st	1989-1991	2 (1D, 1R)	28 (15D, 13R)	30 (16D, 14R)

Please note: table shows maximum number of women elected or appointed to serve in that Congress at one time. Some filled out unexpired terms; some were never sworn in and one was a non-voting delegate from pre-statehood Hawaii.

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